

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed on February 24, 2004.

Claims 1-18 are pending in this Application, Claims 1-17 stand rejected and Claim 18 has been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-6, and 9-14 are amended, and new Claim 19 is added by the present Amendment.

The Specification was objected to because of informalities related to FIG. 3. Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for being indefinite. Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Azuma (JP 10-220480, hereinafter “Azuma”).

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicants’ representative on March 29, 2004. During the interview, Amendments to the claims as herein presented were proposed, and arguments as hereinafter developed were presented. The present invention discloses a novel and nonobvious cage for bearings that is simple to produce, having substantially closed chambers. Such a cage can be produced from a single part, compared to at least two parts in conventional cages, and allows for the production of an orifice in the chamber that is advantageous in controlling the distribution of the lubricant to avoid the generation of negative pressures inside the chamber, thus facilitating a more even distribution of the lubricant.¹ As discussed during the personal interview, Azuma does not disclose such a cage for a bearing. Although an agreement was not reached during the interview, it was indicated in the personal interview summary (form PTO 413) that the Examiner and Applicants’ representative “talked about embodiments and

¹ See, for example, specification, page 2, paragraphs 6 and 7.

claim limitations that overcome immediate prior art[, and arrived at] language to overcome 112 rejections and objections to specifications."

During the interview, an IDS filed on this Application on May 29, 2002 containing seven different references was discussed because reference JP 61-140616 was crossed out as being incomplete and not considered for lack of an English abstract. A closer inspection of the file indicated that an abstract was submitted for that reference. Applicants thank the Examiner for faxing a form PTO 1449 with JP 61-140616 initialed to indicate that this reference has been considered.

Applicants have herein submitted a replacement paragraph in the specification to correct the outstanding informality based on language mutually agreed upon during the personal interview and respectfully request reconsideration of the same.

As to the outstanding rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendments to the independent claims, based on the language discussed during the personal interview, reciting the storage space having an inner wall, two lateral walls, and an outer wall and removing the language reciting the orientation of the outlet, overcome the basis for the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112. Applicants respectfully request their withdrawal. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, he is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work with the Examiner in a joint effort to derive mutually acceptable language.

Based on the results of the personal interview and the present amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that the outstanding anticipation rejections based on Azuma are now moot. Their withdrawal is respectfully requested.

Finally, Applicants have submitted herein new Claim 19, which is supported by subject matter disclosed on page 3, paragraphs 20 and 21 of the disclosure. At least because

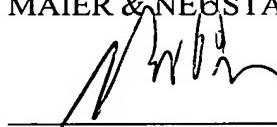
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of its dependency on Claim 9, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 19 patently distinguishes over Azuma.

Based at least on the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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